LEONARD BACON · SHERWOOD ANDERSON

The Saturday Review of Literature

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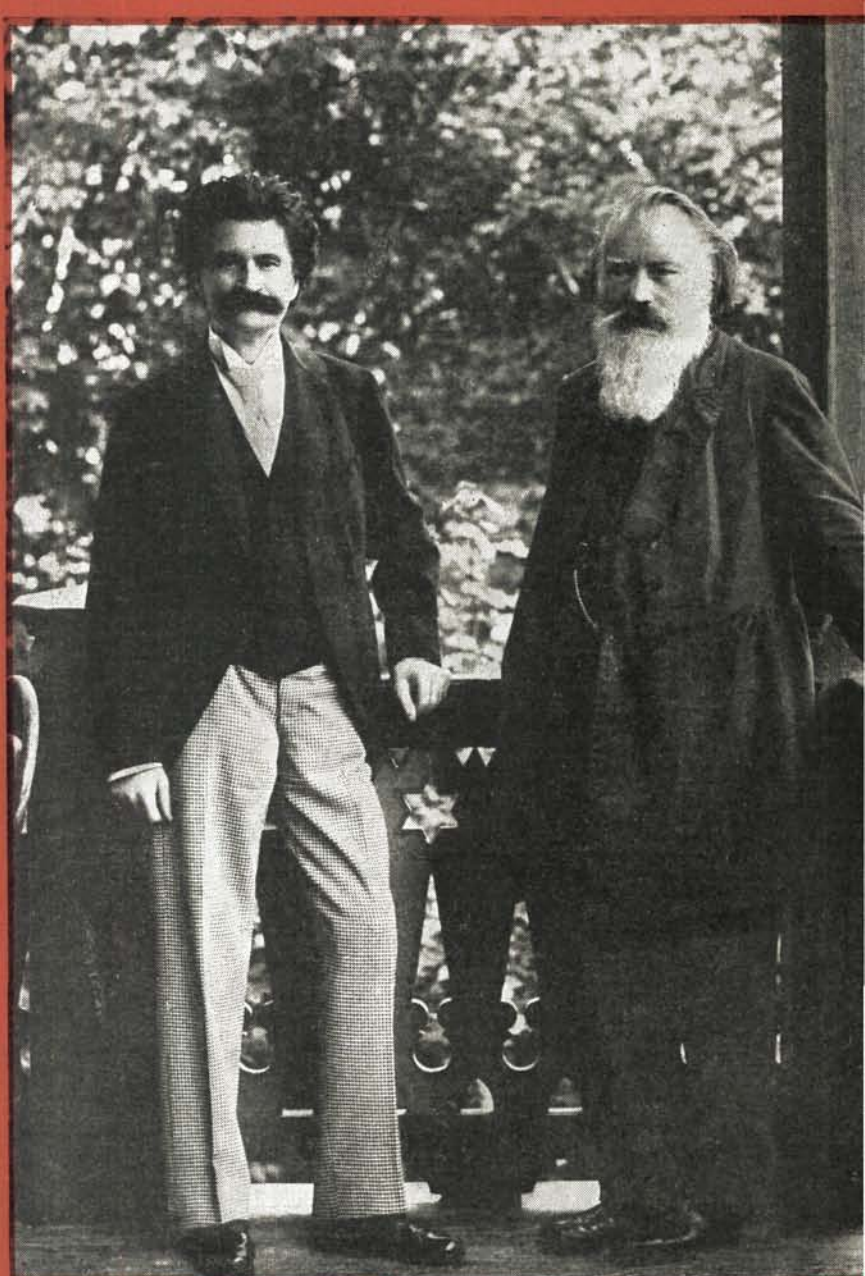

JOHANN STRAUSS with Johannes Brahms: "Few of us are accustomed to relating the dance to the profundities of history, politics, and the development of social man" . . . *(See page 5)*

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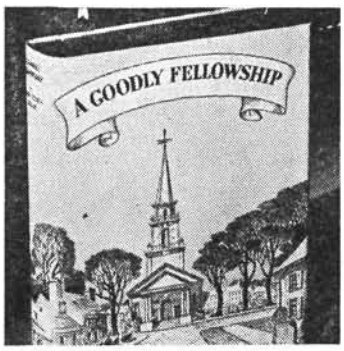

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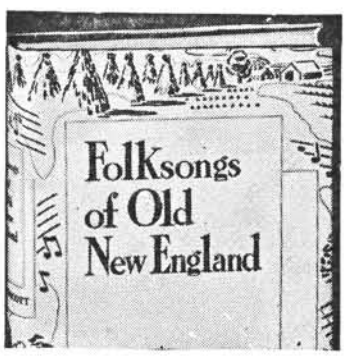

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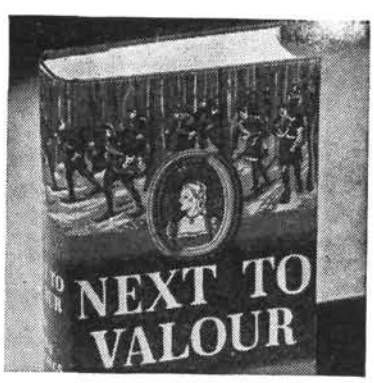

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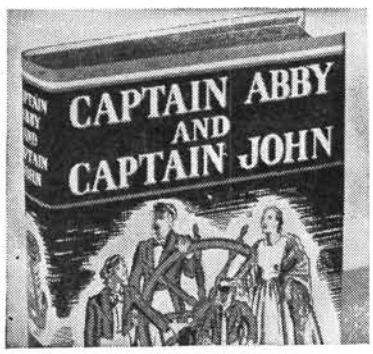

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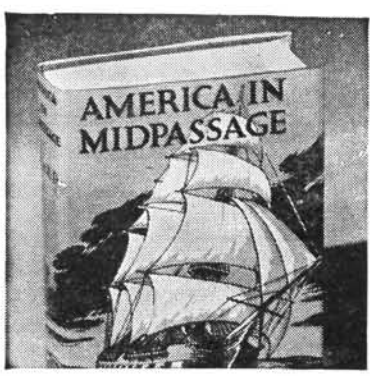

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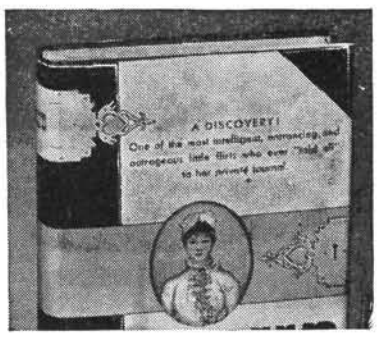

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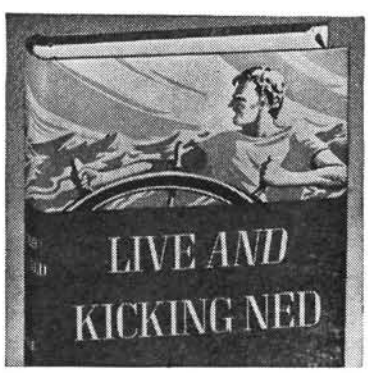

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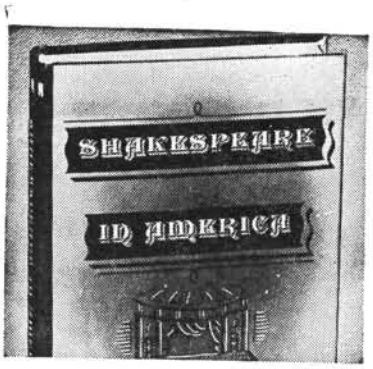

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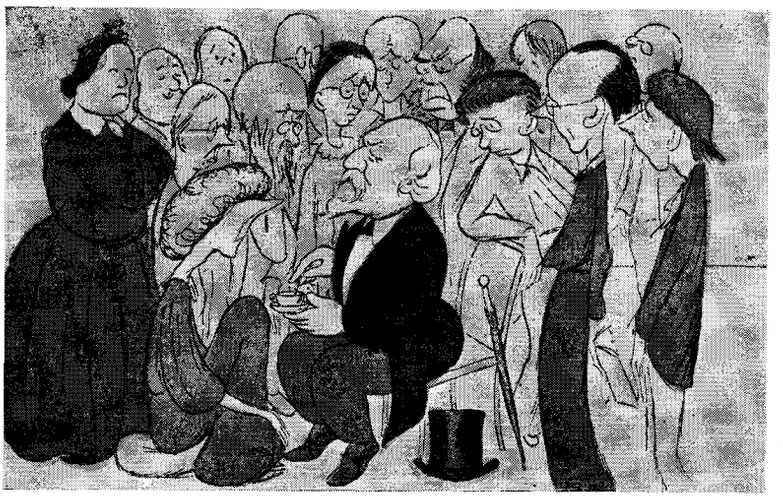
FIFTY YEARS AFTER

BY LEONARD BACON



Robert Browning taking tea with the Browning Society. (Caricature by Max Beerbohm, from "The Poets' Corner.")

ON the 12th of December, 1899, fifty years ago, less a few days, there was dramatic silence in one of those Venetian palaces which Italian noblemen were glad, then as now, to rent to barbarians of wealth or distinction. The handsome old father of the man who had taken the place for the winter had caught a bad cold during a visit to a neighboring town where thirty-seven years before he had dreamed some striking dreams. But the old man's heart was undependable nowadays and even a snuffle was dangerous. Everything known to the doctors was done to shield the guttering candle, but it was clear, in the old man's own phrase, that he was nearing the place—unobstrusively, and almost cryptically, in his own way. The not too exciting son, who had definite views on literary property, and a friend or two waited for the end which came gently, unaccompanied by any gnomic deliverance such as the great are required by convention to utter at ultimate moments. But there could have been few intelligent men in the English-speaking world, who did not feel a sad motion of the mind next morning at their breakfast-tables, when they read that Robert Browning, famous for forty years, was at length calm and dead.

Tastes differ (and a good thing too! as has been noticed), but as far as the present writer is concerned Browning is the most powerful of the Victorians. Many of them have withered pretty badly. And some of them have been assisted into temporary obscurity by the sort of critic who believes that "slapping dead lions" is a sure way to the favor of living hyenas. They have made a convention of it to such an extent that there is a marked tendency among persons who apparently cannot read well to fancy that no one could write well between 1837 and 1890. But so far, to my knowledge, none of the new jackals has ventured to snap at Browning. Certainly no one has gone the length of writing a book (such as has been written about Tennyson) dedicated to the purpose of discrowning him and making a little money. This is sensible, for there is reason to believe that such a book would not sell well. Though it is possible that Browning is less read than formerly, it is clear that he is still read a great deal and that "something vital in his sap keeps his leaf green" after fifty years. Some timid remarks, mainly summaries of elder and better opinions, are perhaps in order on the quality and character of that vitality.

To descend to the crassly material, the following facts may be cited. Letters to three well known and very courteous publishing firms elicited some information with respect to interest in Browning during the last fifty years, which rather astonished the writer. For those three firms alone, and there are others in the field, have sold over two hundred thousand copies of his *works*. Two of the firms publish editions as complete as scholarship can make them. The third brings out a selection which must include more than half of his writings, in other words far more than what is ordinarily called a selection, which last inferior species occurs in numbers too enormous to investigate. In short I do not think it rash to estimate that at no time has there been a demand on the average of less than five thousand copies of his complete works a year for an entire half century. And though the last decade has shown a slowing up, other men than publishers have called attention to diminished markets since 1929.

Some ghoul has stolen my copy of "Lapsus Calami." Otherwise this paragraph would begin with an appropriate quotation from "The Me-Society up at Cambridge." Browning Societies seem to have vanished, and a good thing for his fame too. When that remarkable creature Furnival, "the angry monkey" of the great war with Swinburne, founded the first chapter of the order, he did what lay in his power to injure a man whom he greatly and legitimately admired. The unregenerate were bound to laugh at the exegetic melancholy of rather ineffective eccentrics. And it is permissible to believe that the man in the street, who Browning knew "would love him yet," was considerably delayed in arriving at his final and favorable verdict, by an organization of highbrows who monopolized the true word and were clearly a combine operating in restraint of trade. Their dark elucidations still lend point to Professor Lounsbery's satisfactory remark: "Browning commentators are like fog-horns. They indicate that there is a fog but do nothing to dispel it."

That there is a fog no reasonable and honest man has ever chosen to deny. Unlike most great poets, and unhappily like a great many second-rate ones, Browning is frequently and unnecessarily obscure. And by obscurity I mean a depth of darkness unpierceable by a fair amount of intelligence coupled with a fair amount of information. Mrs. Carlyle turned away bewildered from "Sordello." Barrett Wendell was only throwing his weight about when he quoted from the same poem with the air of one who cites the wholly familiar. Dozens

Next Week

ST. ELMO: OR NAMED FOR A BEST-SELLER
By EARNEST ELMO CALKINS

HISTORY AND ROMANCE OF THE HORSE
By ARTHUR VERNON
Reviewed by Phil Stong

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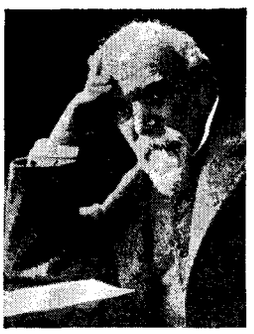
of anecdotes testify to the astonishment of the Victorians in the presence of what they judged, often not without reason, to be incomprehensible. I will go further. Perhaps no one ever properly understood "Sordello." Yet it is fair to say that, however incoherent and obfuscated it may be, if you want a vivid picture of Italy before Dante, it's your book. The fiery vignettes of hill-town mobs, of the swift horrors of battle, of the slow agonies of sieges, are not to be sneezed at and show the hand admired later in poems no one ever thought difficult. Sir Leslie Stephen, delightful, straightforward, and pungent as mustard, was, I think, the first to analyse judicially "what might appear to be a perverse pleasure in not being understood." According to him Browning had a sort of antipathy to relative pronouns and was generally allergic to other grammatical connections. He seemed to love an ellipsis for its own sweet sake. And quite apart from a form of language of difficult construction, he exhibited a distressing and almost pedantic tendency "to explain the unknown in terms of the unheard of." If an idea is hard to understand, then, as Chesterton might say and probably did, it is necessary to provide an illustration that cannot be understood at all. The instances are famous and much too numerous, and I for one am always vaguely incredulous as I watch the commentators drag things "desperate and done with" from caverns underground into half-lighted suburbs of meaning. What if there were significance that has escaped altogether? It is fair to add that however aposiopetically he may deal with his idea, Browning always does mean something, like Donne, and most unlike those after-born who discovered that there was no necessity in poetry for so uncongenial an abstraction as what is commonly called thought. Parenthetically, it is of some interest to observe that Browning was first noticed in a big way as a star of the first magnitude only four or five years before the variable Rimbaud began strange burning in the French heavens, at which moment also the lunar Mallarmé was approaching apogee. Was perverse subtlety in the air, or did the Frenchmen learn something to no one's advantage from their great elder contemporary? But be that as it may, we might as well admit that Browning too often did not recognize that it was no part of his calling to write rebuses and enigmas. It makes no difference. His failures are his failures which may easily be mocked. In the cant phrase, it would require a man of his own power to speak adequately of his successes.

I must plead guilty to not knowing Browning as the true votary knows him, for whom his most crabbèd rhyme or complicated analogy is stuff of immortality and the say-so of Pythagoras. But when he is at what seems to me his height, I still feel about him as I felt when I stumbled as a small boy on a cheap school-text bound so as to displease the eye, and annotated so as to discourage the mind. Happily neither consideration weighed with me at the time, any more than with an unpleasant school boy in a hateful story, who had loved those same "quarter-comprehended verses." It is only fair to that bitter child to say that he had pointed out what I subsequently read with interest. The furious French lady overseeing the concoction of a chemically interesting poison for her rival, the dying bishop ordering his tomb, the tulip like a thin clear bubble of blood, leaders lost for a handful of silver, defeated patriots, Ronsard asking leading questions, not to mention the note of solitary and enigmatic triumph on a highly individual horn, "these matters touched and moved me." Nor have I forgotten them, though for me, as for others, many a comet has hurtled to the ecliptic, circled the sun, and with diminishing brightness relapsed into darkness at least as eternal as the Victorian night.



Browning in later life

Put it any way you like, the old commonplace about Browning holds water. In spite of his predilection for the abstruse and the complex, he had to an enormous degree, and more so than any of the great men his contemporaries, a quality which connected him with that singular creature the common man. Walter Savage Landor (I wonder who first fished that particular old murex up in this connection) put his finger on it when he wrote as early as 1846 that but for Shakespeare,

> Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
> No man hath walkt along our roads with step
> So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
> So varied in discourse.

The old devil knew what he was talking about. Any one can see that Browning had the Chaucerian interest and curiosity. And almost everybody has said so, which for once doesn't make it less true. In the long run Browning is always fascinated by the mere creature, by those individual elements and traits which are so much more essential parts of persons than the queer transient figments which the serious-minded call ideas and the gods call nonsense. And the result is that, as some critic has noticed, he seems absolutely to sculpture rather than to paint his vivid creatures, though God knows there's color to burn. You feel that you are seeing master-work "in the psychological solid, which is a space of many dimensions." And his people deny that they are creatures of the imagination, like William James's crab that denied it was a crustacean, crying vigorously, "No! I am I—myself!"

Such a power, as is true of all real power, is well outside the world where things get explained in little articles. But it is permissible to account in part for it by the burning satisfaction in observation he himself takes and transmits. Someone has said that Browning felt an almost illicit thrill in what he seized on—a sort of agreeable guilt. His pleasure in penetrating psychological mystery is absolutely animal. And he passes it on. You cannot escape. When his hand is in, it is impossible to read a line without feeling a living sense of a living creature watching with living curiosity something curiously alive. He weaves the circle. He utters the word. And banal though it be to paraphrase half the critics of half a century, in the twinkling of a bedpost you *become* Mr. Gigadibs testing his first plow and the last chapter of St. John. You are transmuted into the menacing and terrified tyrant. St. Praxed is at his sermon on the Mount and your mind swims like the prelate's. You ride through the Metidja, not in the least knowing where it is. You walk chained in front of the Bourbon's mercenaries. You may turn into a Duke of Ferrara, and, if the case is in its early stages, even into a bottle of Tokay.

There are only half a dozen writers who have had such a capacity to project the beam of reality in any chosen direction. And this in Browning was accompanied by, and was perhaps the consequence of, a strange virtue of objectivity. Tennyson's passionate young man in "Locksley Hall" looks decidedly ridiculous now that his battles are won, lost, or forgotten, because Tennyson is too snarled up in the issues and his young man is a lay-figure. But Blougram is not ridiculous, though the questions under

(*Continued on page* 16)

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Geschichte aus dem Wienerwalz

JOHANN STRAUSS, FATHER AND SON. By H. E. Jacob. Translated by Marguerite Woolf. New York: The Greystone Press. 1939. 385 *pp., with index.* $3.25.

Reviewed by MARCIA DAVENPORT

THE appearance of a long and serious book on the most lighthearted aspects of Viennese culture seems particularly poignant at this time. The new biography of the Strausses, father and son, by H. E. Jacob, is in a sense a deeply disturbing book to read. To anyone who has known and loved the real Vienna, the book is a distressing expedition into nostalgia. It is by no means easy to capture the essence of the Viennese spirit on the printed page, and it is not easy even for a Viennese to do so. Although his hand is rather heavy, the author of the new Strauss book does recreate that unforgettable and elusive flavor.

Few of us are accustomed to relating the dance to the profundities of history, politics, and the development of social man. It may be startling to some, therefore, to begin this book with a long analysis of the political upheavals of the French Revolution, and follow their repercussions across Europe, tracing them in transition from the minuet of the aristocrats to the waltz of the triumphant bourgeois.

It is interesting nevertheless to find at last an integrated account of the rise and triumph of the waltz. We seldom remember today the violent controversies in political as well as moral origin which surrounded the birth of the greatest of dances. Once established as the keynote of the expanding nineteenth century, a whole civilization developed around it. Vienna took its existing apparatus for unparalleled pleasure-making, with all its delicious accoutrements of sylvan amusement resorts, delectable food, *Grinzinger, Heuriger, Gumpoldskirchner,* beer, coffee, whipped cream, and naughty witticism, and put all this at the disposal of the new dance. The mass enthusiasm, so vital and so overwhelming, had to produce a guiding deity, and this it did in the elder Johann Strauss. He soared above his contemporaries who, like Lanner, were themselves teeming with waltz music, and he established himself as the founder of one of the most remarkable dynasties in all of music, which is so brilliantly supplied with fertile families.

Early in his book Mr. Jacob begins to take us on the rounds of the enormous public dance halls, the very thought of which makes today's lover of real dancing grind his teeth at the contemplation of a New York night-club. Dance palaces like the *Sperl,* the *Mondscheinsaal,* the *Sofiensaal,* and the immortal Dommayer's Casino were to the Strausses with their orchestras, one and sometimes two hundred strong, what La Scala was to Verdi and what Bayreuth was to Wagner. Any book that can recreate the atmosphere of these tremendous halls set in the midst of lantern-lighted parks, furnished with acres of tables and chairs, serving carloads of fried chicken, mouth-watering pastries, and wine, and catering to a thousand or more dancers at a time, should be considered a permament addition to

Volksgarten, 1830

the literature of music. All of this plus his never-failing notations of the political violences that shaped that age are the groundwork of Mr. Jacob's book. He is clearly one of those erudite Central European scholars whose research on any subject is exhaustive to the last detail. His book is accordingly crammed with innumerable pieces of authentic history, each in itself a seeming trifle, but all together a rich tapestry of living colors within which he has wrapped up the extraordinary personalities of Strauss, father and son, with all their satellites. Better still, he has kept the whole thing whirling in waltz time to the accompaniment of musical comment so vivid that one can imaginatively hear waltz music through page after page of reading.

The lives of the Strausses, for all the well-known attempts in biography, fiction, and operetta to dramatize them, have never before been probed in such detail as this. It comes as a surprise to discover the real drama played out between Johann Strauss the elder and his still more famous son. The indomitable Anna Streim, wife of the elder and mother of the younger Strauss, was a formidable woman — iron-willed, self-controlled, and a demon on behalf not of her outraged self (Strauss was a scandalously bad husband) but of her favorite son. It was Anna who encouraged Johann Strauss the younger to defy his father's opposition to his becoming a musician and to establish himself in one memorable appearance as his father's only rival. Thereafter Johann Strauss the younger begins to usurp the throne and to earn for himself the indisputable title of Waltz King. The simultaneous tracing of the lives of both the Strausses is an illuminating picture of the elder—gross and peasant born—contrasted with the younger, whom the space of one generation converted into a man of elegance if not of entire refinement.

In the present day our only parallel with the Viennese ritual of the waltz at its height is the morbid spectacle of a mob of jitterbugs bashing their nerves to pieces against that horrifying phenomenon known as swing. To compare this spectacle with a great dance palace filled with couples whirling to the strains of what can justly be called great music composed expressly for them, and conducted by a fascinating black-haired genius using bow instead of baton, is to see modern existence in its ugliest light.

Then one goes a step further and follows Johann Strauss the younger into the theater where his immortal operettas soon proved their right to stand alongside the works of the greatest composers. It is no wonder to find Mr. Jacob treating the scores of "Fledermaus" and "Zigeunerbaron" with the same consideration he would give to the most weighty of tragic operas if he were undertaking a discussion of them. Down to the present day the inheritors of Johann Strauss the younger are still trying to echo the moods of these triumphant classics. It seems a hollow sort of occupation when one imagines what might be the result if one of the best Broadway producers were to stage a great Strauss operetta with every lavish means at his command. Perhaps such a venture would accentuate the pallid state of present-day musical comedy.

This new book about the Strauss dynasty steps rightly into a vacant place that has long waited for it. If it is somewhat ponderous in approach and if it stresses the social rather than the more human aspects of the Strauss geniuses, it nevertheless is altogether illuminating and altogether valuable. It also has that wrench-

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ing bitter-sweet perfume of the Vienna that has gone. Most of us know and will not admit that that vanished heaven will probably never reappear. But such a book as this, teeming with the vitality that keeps Vienna alive in the hearts of those of us who loved it, makes us believe it impossible that this same *joie de vivre* shall never be again. We may have to wait an unimaginable length of time. But nothing can stop us from believing that the figures of revolution, like the inexorable pattern of the waltz itself, will some day circle back to the starting point. At least we had better hope so.

Marcia Davenport is the author of "Mozart," a biography, and "Of Lena Geyer," a novel about musicians.

Late Victorian Literature

FIGURES OF TRANSITION. By Granville Hicks. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. 326 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by R. Ellis Roberts

IN his preface to this study of "British Literature at the End of the Nineteenth Century" Mr. Hicks, who takes as main subjects William Morris, Thomas Hardy, Samuel Butler, George Gissing, Oscar Wilde, and Rudyard Kipling, claims that "concentration on six men permits detailed treatment of each, and at the same time it is possible, in writing about the six, to say most of the things that ought to be said about the literature of the period." This is true enough: unfortunately it is also true that Mr. Hicks's detailed treatment is sketchy and inadequate, and appears too often to depend on other critics and historians of the eighties and nineties; while he fails altogether to notice many of the most important trends in his period. His time-limits are narrow; no authors "who did the major part of their work after 1900" are discussed. Does major imply here bulk or quality? If bulk, Kipling should be excluded; if quality, what is Hardy doing, whose "Dynasts" belongs to this century? It would, however, be a hopeless task to clarify the confusion shown in this volume. To take one example only, Mr. Hicks throughout this preface writes as if his "figures of transition" were not Victorian: he speaks of "linking Victorian and modern literature," and apologizes for his inadequate treatment of "Victorian" authors in his preliminary chapter. No one familiar with the cultural and intellectual background of Victorian times could make such an error as to regard these authors, or others whom Mr. Hicks considers—Stevenson, George Moore, and Swinburne—as anything but Victorian.

As I read "Figures of Transition" it became clearer and clearer that Mr. Hicks is sadly unfamiliar with that background, and for that reason, I suppose, has missed grievously much of the most important movements in British literature between 1880 and 1900. How would a serious scholar distinguish the literature of those two decades from the forty-odd Victorian years that preceded them? First, the popular growth of estheticism; the arrival of the regional novelists, especially the Scotch—Mr. Hicks does not mention Barrie or Neil Munro; the increasing interest in psychology —Havelock Ellis's "The New Spirit" is typical; the "new humor"—Barry Pain, W. W. Jacobs, F. Anstey, Jerome K. Jerome; the huge displacement in popular fiction made by the "revolting" women—Olive Schreiner, Sarah Grand, "C. E. Raimond," E. L. Voynich, George Egerton; the new pessimism (so widely different from Leopardo or James Thomson) shown in the sudden popularity of FitzGerald's "Rubaiyat" and in A. E. Housman's "A Shropshire Lad;" the intense interest in religious problems—Mrs. Humphry Ward, Mrs. Linton, and the very English, very beautiful stories of "Mark Rutherford"; and

Marooned on the Danube

ACROSS THE DARK RIVER. By Peter Mendelssohn. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1939. 339 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. Rothman

AMONG the solid headlines of early 1938, the time of Austria's disappearance, there was a little story that flickered in and out of the news, received running mention for a week or so, and then trailed off into uncertainty and silence. It seems that the Nazi troopers had kicked large numbers of Jews out of their home towns and across the Austrian border, without passports or possessions. These wanderers met with Hungarian and Czechoslovakian frontier guards, who treated them with less brutality but equal firmness; they could not enter and were shunted back into the arms of the Germans. Thus they roamed helplessly in a narrow, muddy strip of border land, hiding from the bayonets of three countries, until they found refuge upon a rotting barge anchored in the Danube. There were about fifty-five upon the barge, forbidden to land anywhere, perishing of exposure, disease, and hunger, when the newspapers lost track of them and dropped the story.

It seems unlikely now that the story will ever be forgotten again, for it has been made the basis of an exceedingly fine novel. Peter Mendelssohn, a descendant of the composer and an exile from Germany, has told it very carefully, very thoroughly and movingly. He has traced it from its beginnings in the town of Kitsee—the first disturbances, the pounding upon doors by night, the fateful onrush of lawlessness which we, reading, watch with the fascinated stare of foreknowledge—to the final tragic isolation upon the barge. What makes this

Peter Mendelssohn

story valuable far beyond its immediate clarification of an incident is the way in which it epitomizes the whole atmosphere out of which the incident emerged. Within the confines of this case history the meaning of the Nazi revolution is plainly reflected, not in direct political analysis but in the novelist's way, through the eyes and voices of men and women. Mendelssohn has drawn his characters in tender detail. They are for the most part humble, unaggressive, little people with faith in certain undefined laws of justice; this can't be, they keep thinking, even as they are being destroyed, how can this be? They speak sometimes with the eloquence of the human values they believe in, and when they do we are listening to the final indictment that must be brought against the men who are denying humanity. For its eloquence, simplicity, and sheer narrative power, this book will stand out among the novels that are setting forth this indictment.

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lastly the beginning of that cataclysm of thrillers, sleuth stories, and uneasy stories in the writings of Conan Doyle, Arthur Machen, Bram Stoker, and M. P. Shiel. Mr. Hicks makes no effort to appraise any of these except the esthetic movement, and there he has handicapped himself by taking Wilde rather than Pater as its originator.

The lamentable inadequacy of this book as a treatment of its avowed subject might be pardoned if Mr. Hicks wrote brilliantly, made gay incidental judgments, or had even written a good book on some other subject: but there is no such consolation. What can be said of the ordinary sense of a critic who calls Charles Kingsley "solid?" Kingsley, that impetuous, rather hysterical, honest, and impulsive parson? Kingsley, who first said that religion was the opium of the people? For Mr. Hicks, William Morris is an atheist, Tennyson orthodox, Trollope stuffy, Ruskin "conventional in religion" and W. S. Gilbert "good-natured"! Beside these gross errors in judgment Mr. Hicks's occasional mistakes of fact are negligible.

The best chapter in the book is certainly that on William Morris; but how much better it would have been had Mr. Hicks only seen that which divides Morris's communism from the pure prophecy of Karl Marx. Morris called himself a Marxist, though he could not read "Das Kapital," and did not profess to understand economics. Mr. Hicks is to be congratulated on his insistence on Morris's great influence on the more vital and more generous among the next generation; unfortunately he believes that Morris, once he had abandoned the idea of taking holy orders, became completely skeptical. It is difficult to be positive of Morris's own personal religion; many who knew him best thought of him as always a believer, though with no philosophy of religion behind his belief. What is important is this, that he was in the tradition of the communism of John Ball, the communism that differs from Marx's in that its upholders see no necessity for atheism. The first socialist body in England was The Guild of St. Matthew, founded by an English priest, Steward Headlam, a friend of Morris's, who till the end of his life welcomed the help of men with an orthodox outlook.

Mr. Hicks writes with a little more knowledge of politics than of literature; but even here he is inadequate in his apparent ignorance of the close alliance between the labor movement in England and the various religious bodies, and the work accomplished in social amelioration under the inspiration of the Oxford Movement.

Poets of the World, Relax

A TURNING WIND. Poems by Muriel Rukeyser. New York: The Viking Press. 1939. 120 *pp.* $2.

AMERICA WAS PROMISES. By Archibald MacLeish. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1939. 20 *pp.* 75 *cents.*

Reviewed by SELDEN RODMAN

WITH interest in poetry at another low ebb, it is painful (especially for a poet) to add to the clamor for clarity. It may be thought that even the best modern poets don't care about clarity —but they do. Mr. MacLeish, through his radio plays, has made the bravest and most successful attempt of any poet of his generation to bring poetry to the masses. Miss Rukeyser, in "Theory of Flight," made the first (and to date the most convincing) poetic synthesis of symbolism and socialism.

Anybody who happens to be familiar with the arrangement of my "New Anthology of Modern Poetry" will concede that I do not inveigh against either modernism in general or Mr. MacLeish and Miss Rukeyser in particular. The trouble with "A Turning Wind" is that Miss Rukeyser, having made, in the rather prosily documented "U. S. 1," a not too successful démarche from her brilliant first book, now turns in precisely the opposite direction. Steeping herself in Kenneth Burke, Jacob Boehme, Willard Gibbs, and Donald A. Mackenzie, she has written a book so dense with symbols that extracting the poetry on any one page is a scholar's problem. One can get a great kick out of a Picasso, say, without understanding its meaning at all. There it is. It excites you or it doesn't. But all blocks of type (except mr. cummings's) look the same. If they don't persistently sing, they must be understood. "But the car full of Communists put out hands and guns/blew 1-2-3 on the horn before the/surrealist house, a spiral in Cataluna." These lines, popping up suddenly in a poem called "The Fear of Form" without any apparent preparation, would be entirely baffling if I didn't happen to know that Miss Rukeyser had been in Spain several years ago—and at that, I don't know much more than I did. The five long poems at the end of the book are a kind of a metaphysical soul-searching of a painter, a poet, a mathematician, a musician, and an agitator. The difficulties here are two. First, the figures chosen are extremely obscure: where few if any readers will be familiar with their works, much less their lives, their symbolic value is questionable. Secondly, the problem of writing about what goes on in the mind of an artist or a pure scientist, unless the thoughts are very dramatically connected with events, is insuperable. But Miss Rukeyser has too great a talent to remain long in this *selva oscura.* Her experiment will be privately if not publicly beneficial. Poems like "The Island" are ample proof that she can still write simply. And I, for one, expect in her next book a return to the grand manner.

Chidnoff

Muriel Rukeyser

If Miss Rukeyser errs in laying it on too thick, Mr. MacLeish is guilty in quite the opposite direction. There are less than twelve small pages of verse in "America Was Promises," and even at that the message is stretched like a tightrope. The argument is as follows. "There is an answer. . . . There is Spain, Austria, Poland, Bohemia. . . . The promises are theirs who take them. . . ." Leading up to that there is beautiful writing about pioneering and the American Dream and our squanderers of material and spiritual wealth, but there is none of the wit of the "Frescoes" or the excitement of "The Fall of the City." The images are familiar and the general effect is repetitious and toneless. If Mr. MacLeish's meaning is often vague too, ("Who is the traveler on these waters/Expects the future as a shore: forsees/Like Indies to the west the ending—he/The rumor of the surf intends?") it is perhaps because he has been too busy to give his mood the intellectual clarification it demands.

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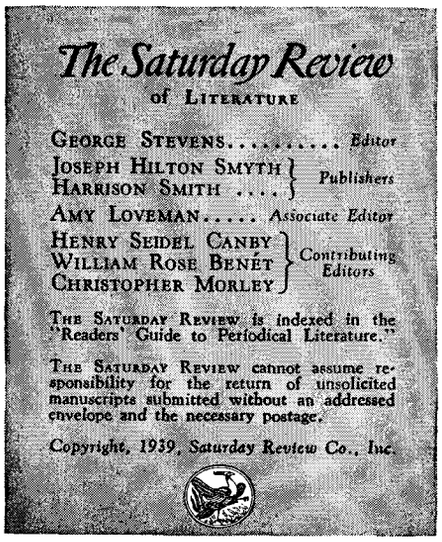
The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Careful, Mr. Stolberg

IT is quite possible to loathe both Hitlerism and Stalinism, and still to dislike the controversial methods of Mr. Benjamin Stolberg. His series of articles on "The Collapse of American Communism" in the *Herald-Tribune* have been often illuminating, at least to the innocent, but, as they approach his own field of journalism and literature, they begin to read like editorials in the *Pravda* where any irresponsible statement is good enough to hang the head of a democrat and a liberal.

The writer of this editorial is among the innocent. His involvement with Russian ideology has been limited to the loss of $500 on a bond of the Provisional Government, and a sympathy with a few of the expressed ideals of the later Soviet government. He has profoundly distrusted the dictatorship of the proletariat from the beginning, and has been more shocked than surprised by purges and a new-found imperialism. Perhaps it is only his innocence which makes him desire more evidence than Mr. Stolberg offers of a reign of terror by American Communist Party members in publishing offices and Hollywood, and of their sabotage of young writers everywhere who were not Stalinists.

As for the League of American Writers and the Writers Project, he had supposed that American poets, playwrights, and novelists tend now, as they have always, to be radical, that writers on relief are not likely to be satisfied with the existing economic order, and that because so many of our writers were to be found in company with Communists who were later to be proved to take their orders from abroad, was no evidence that they were anything but good Americans leftish in their politics. Perhaps Mr. Stolberg thinks this too, but his diatribe sounds a little like the alarmist attacks of the Russians upon the Finns. Either the Communist Party in America has been made up chiefly of writers and teachers, and its membership has been much understated, or Mr. Stolberg is wrong.

This may be the innocence of a liberal—an innocence perhaps worth clinging to in a world where the unliberal seem to think that abuse is quite as good as facts. But even the innocent must protest against Mr. Stolberg's ignorance of the characteristic processes by which the democratic—and especially the American—mind has always reached its conclusions. He seems to think that for an honest man to support a principle—whether of radicalism or conservatism—and then change his mind when the principle is invalidated in the men or party who have professed to practise it, is a sign of weakness to be jeered at, a proof that the American intellectual is a dupe, a victim, a jellyfish not to be compared with the hardy dogmatists who have always known the middle name of truth.

He offers us a choice between defenders of Russia who have changed their minds, like Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, Mr. Vincent Sheean, Mr. Granville Hicks—and the wise guys like Mr. Stolberg. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks was "politically unsophisticated," Mr. Vincent Sheean "has knowingly fronted" for the Stalinists. Mr. Granville Hicks, who wrote a Marxian history of American literature, is "the laughing-stock of American scholars." Careful, Mr. Stolberg. Mr. Brooks is not philosophically naive, he has shown that he can interpret on the basis of sound scholarship an earlier American period. It may be that, in spite of his sympathy (like Howells, like Mark Twain, like Thoreau) with radicalism, he is wiser than you in his estimates of conflicting forces today. If the Stalinists have used him, that is too bad, but one doubts whether they have profited. Mr. Granville Hicks was once a Communist, and may still be a Marxist. His history of American letters is highly controversial, and, where the theory of the class struggle fails to work, definitely wrong—as were the New England historians who tried to explain all America in terms of Boston. But far from being a "laughing-stock," he is recognized by scholars as having made a fresh and often exceedingly valuable contribution to American literary history—whatever the opinion of scholarship may be of his new book on British literature. Mr. Vincent Sheean—but who can have read Mr. Sheean's books, with their rich emotional content, their careful accuracy, their ready indignation against cruelty and injustice and tyranny, and believe for an instant that he "knowingly fronted" for a despicable dictatorship? Deceived maybe, disillusioned certainly, although if Stalin was his Lost Leader, then pigs are elephants. But it is no crime, nor even a weakness, to uphold possible innocence—and how many thought a year ago that Russia would be an aggressor nation?—against the proved guilt of predatory dictatorship.

There is an old phrase, Mr. Stolberg, about fouling your own nest.

H. S. C.

Tactics for Offense

BY PHYLLIS McGINLEY

An attack on the "bad taste" of Britain's first popular war song, "We're Going to Hang Out the Washing on the Siegfried Line," was made in Berlin's English news broadcast. —The New York Times.

THE Soldier's brave as brave can be.
His heart beats high at wartime,
As off to meet the enemy
He marches in 4-4 time.
He marches north, he marches south,
Nor comprehends what fear is.
The taste of battle on his mouth
More sweet than lager beer is.
Amid the cannon's thunderclaps
We watch his courage flowering.
But an opponent's social lapse—
How that can send him cowering!

For the Soldier's soul is sensitive.
It yields in tact to no man.
The raking gun,
The bursting bomb,
They find him un-
Afraid and calm.
What really shatters his aplomb
Is the rudeness of his foeman.

'Tis that, 'tis that which always gets
The hero hot and flustered.
Hard Words are more than bayonets,
As poisonous as Mustard.
A ballad writ in taunting verse,
A coarse, uncivil ditty,
Can wound the valiant warrior worse
Than raids upon his city.
While gaucheries can undermine
His very forts and trenches,
And send a shiver down his spine
And fright him till he blenches.

So call the culprit nations forth
And pledge them to this vision:
Oh, let them plunder,
Let them kill,
Tear towns asunder
If they will,
But guard the martial spirit, still,
From music hall derision.

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Letters to the Editor: *Literature and the Contemporary World*

"Lest the Republic Come to Harm"

SIR:—Mr. Canby's editorial "Lest the Republic Come to Harm" is the strongest and best and most timely piece of writing that has appeared on that page in a long time. It seems to me that there is no need greater just now than for such distinctions as those Mr. Canby made to be brought to people's attention. And when a person with his reputation for sincere and not-too-radical appraisals expresses these values as forcibly and unequivocably as he did here, the effect is all the greater.

PAULA SNELLING.

Clayton, Ga.

SR of What?

SIR:—I have been considerably amused by *SRL'S* attempts to capitalize upon the numerous fevers arising from the current European conflict. Page One of the November 25 issue, given to those amiable Russians; Stalin, Kerensky, and Krivitsky, caused a preliminary guffaw which was soon changed to a state of profound nostalgia for the days when *SRL* devoted itself almost exclusively to literature, so I determined to make a survey.

This survey amounted to a listing of all first-page articles and main editorials in your magazine since the beginning of 1936, and dividing them into "literary" and "non-literary" groups. The term "non-literary" was used to designate those first-page and editorial features which seemed to owe their existence primarily to political, economic, or social problems. By this definition, "Behind the Bolshevist Mask" must be classed as "non-literary." There has been little previous indication in your pages that *SRL* considers the three Russian gentlemen to be leaders in the field of letters.

Throughout 1936-7-8 the ratio of literary to non-literary features remained almost constantly at a little more than six to one, while during 1939 it has fallen to 3.3 to one. Since the outbreak of hostilities, it has been about one to two, and the end does not seem to have been reached.

I am not sentimental enough to be indignant about all this, but don't you think you should drop the phrase "of Literature" from the name of your magazine, if only for the sake of consistency? Another advantage might be that you wouldn't feel so terribly limited—you see, you could then run an article on Tony Galento or electromagnetic mines without having to scramble around in search of a book to justify your choice of subject.

I have always maintained that there's nothing like a complete literary magazine. *SRL* deserves the praise it has received for having instituted its newest department: "Records in Review."

GEORGE P. BARBAROW, JR.

Morristown, N. J.

"I want to indulge in an orgy of good reading."

Hamlin Garland Exhibit

SIR:—A few dates in the coming winter and spring are still open for showings of the Hamlin Garland literary exhibit which the author has entrusted to Miami University. Hence I shall be glad to communicate with college librarians or English Department chairmen who may be interested in arranging to borrow the exhibit materials.

In Mr. Garland's papers are hundreds of original letters and photographs of his distinguished friends. These include Walt Whitman, Howells, Mark Twain, Henry James, Stephen Crane, Edward MacDowell, Theodore Roosevelt, Hardy, Yeats, Galsworthy, Barrie, and Shaw.

ELDON C. HILL.

Miami University,
Oxford, Ohio.

Literary Nightmare

SIR:—I have what I think might be styled an inverted Mark Twain Literary Nightmare. It is not words that I cannot get rid of. It is a thought for which I can get neither the words nor the author: though it seems to me the author was Huxley—it may have been Tyndall (or I may be all wrong).

Years ago I read and clipped a paragraph with the following import: Huxley (?) had been taunted about being descended from a monkey. He replied in substance "I would not be ashamed to be descended from a monkey, but I would be much ashamed to be descended from a man who used his great talents to mislead mankind."

I have hunted through Bartlett (which I use a great deal) hoping I might find it under "Huxley" or "Tyndall" or in some way run across it. But to no avail.

If anyone happens to have it within reach, I would be happy to have the reference.

HENRY H. GODDARD.

1638 Granville St.,
Columbus, Ohio

The Guild and Free Expression

SIR:—Benjamin Stolberg has in one of his recent *Herald-Tribune* articles included the Book and Magazine Guild in a list of organizations "captured" by the Communists and used by them to strangle free expression. It seems appropriate, therefore, at this time to reaffirm our principles.

As a trade union we have only one purpose: the advancement of the economic interests of publishing employees. We believe that these interests require the maintenance *and expansion* of the volume of books and magazines published, to increase employment and income. We share with most other people a fundamental belief in a free press; we have an economic stake in it as well.

We are not and do not want to be responsible for the theories or opinions of either authors or publishers.

ROBERT JOSEPHY,
President.

Book and Magazine Guild
New York City.

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The Elder Morgan

J. PIERPONT MORGAN: An Intimate Portrait. 1837-1913. By Herbert L. Satterlee. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1939. 595 *pp., with index.* $3.75.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER D. NOYES

THIS is an absorbingly interesting narrative; not less so, in that the greater part of the book is made up of Morgan's personality in other relations than those of Wall Street. His family life, his personal and informal intimacies, his social contacts, his adherence in later life to New England traditions under which he had been brought up (such as close church affiliations or Thanksgiving Day gatherings at his house), his habitual indulgence, even at moments of business crisis, in the relaxation of solitaire—all this is a side of J. P. Morgan which has scarcely been touched upon by his somewhat numerous biographers. No reader will begrudge the space given up by his son-in-law, Mr. Satterlee, to this aspect of a distinguished life.

The first four chapters of the book, portraying Morgan's boyhood and young manhood, were privately printed in 1937, on the centenary of his birth; but to most readers that part of the story will have the interest of novelty. It is written quietly. Except for an occasional reminder of the sources from which incidents or personal impressions were obtained, it might almost duplicate the first chapters of an autobiography—which are often the most arresting part of an interesting man's own reminiscences. Nowhere does Mr. Satterlee's narrative picture a youthful prodigy; indeed, the impression produced on most readers will be surprise at the absence, during those earlier years, of any distinct foreshadowing of Morgan's later achievement.

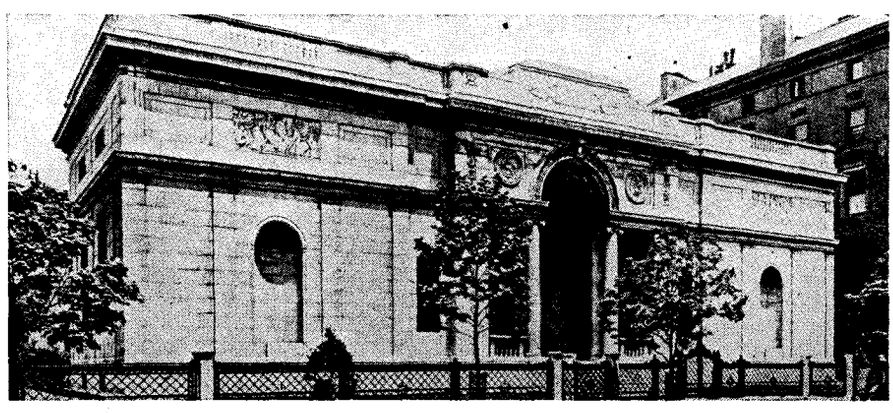
That he was interested in all his occupations, that his school record was good but not remarkable, that he joined enthusiastically in the sports of his companions and mixed sociably with the boys and girls whom he came to know, is evident enough. But of love for art there is little or no indication; the collector's instinct, very characteristic of Morgan's later life, did not seem to be at all in evidence. More than this, neither the keen insight into a business problem, afterward associated with his personality, nor the imagination with which a bold experiment was repeatedly undertaken, nor, in particular, the dominating will-power which, at the climax of his Wall Street career, made him the undisputed leader in American finance, could apparently have been prophesied, even by the nearest associates of his youth. There is in Mr. Satterlee's narrative, indeed, no indication of exceptional business aptitude, at least until Morgan was twenty-one or more. At the age of twenty, as is recalled by one of his relatives, "Pierpont was just crazy to go into business"; but of his qualifications it is only added that "he was orderly and absolutely methodical about correspondence," "very quick at figuring," and had "picked up a good deal of general business information during visits to his father's offices." Considering that his father was a highly successful business man, this would equally have described the qualifications displayed at the same time of life by a host of youths.

Morgan's rapid rise in the business world, the confidence inspired from first to last in his personal integrity—a quality often lacking in aggressive financiers of a generation or two ago—and, particularly, his achievements in financial leadership which became spectacular chapters in Wall Street history, have been described in many other published accounts of his career. Outstanding episodes of the kind were the "gentlemen's agreement" of 1886, whereby the riot act was read to ruinous competitive railway rate-cutting; the "bond syndicate" of 1895, under which all New York banks and foreign-exchange bankers were banded together to restore the Treasury's gold reserve and prevent withdrawal of gold in redemption of legal tenders; the organization of the United States Steel and of the International Mercantile Marine in 1901 and 1902; and the intervention of Morgan, at the head of New York's strong financial institutions, to stop the run on the trust companies in the panic of 1907.

In each of these episodes, as in many others of lesser magnitude, Mr. Morgan's powerful individuality was dominant. All of them exemplified his personal authority over other financial men and institutions and the great part played by his leadership in inspiring public confidence. Mr. Satterlee, naturally enough, leans to the conclusion that, in these more or less complicated undertakings, Morgan's own judgment was at all times correct. But little new light is thrown upon the episodes; and in some of them controversy, which arose long ago as to the wisdom of certain policies or procedure, has not even yet died down. The "gentlemen's agreement" of 1886 did not prevent the subsequent plunge of our railways into bankruptcy; the trouble lay much deeper than competitive rate-cutting. Mistakes were made in the Steel Corporation's early stages, and the Mercantile Marine organization was in many respects a blunder. The 1895 bond syndicate fulfilled its contract with the Treasury when fulfillment had been pronounced impossible. It probably staved off the Treasury's imminent relapse from gold payments, but it did not solve the problem of the currency. The presidential election of 1896 did that. On such questions opinion even now will vary.

But in all of these achievements the character of the man, the dominance of his personality, the driving force of his leadership, the repeated accomplishments (often in a disheartening emergency) of an undertaking carried to success by no one else, made him the center of the picture. Mr. Satterlee, in noticing some criticisms of the 1895 bond syndicate's contract to protect the United States Treasury, asks whether the important part of the operation was not "the value of such a guarantee as Mr. Morgan gave to President Cleveland." The answer is that everything in that notable experiment hung on Morgan's personal guarantee, and that the guarantee of no other man in the United States would have been effective.

Alexander Dana Noyes is financial editor of The New York Times.



The Morgan Library

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Scientist or Utopian?

MARXISM: AN AUTOPSY. By Henry Bamford Parkes. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1939. 300 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

MARXISTS have always insisted that theirs is a "scientific," not a "Utopian," set of beliefs. Even the most modest scientific generalization makes a prediction about the future behavior of the phenomena with which it deals. Marxism has made some very grand predictions about the behavior of men in society; and as the early writings of Marx and Engels are now nearly one hundred years old, it is not unfair to check their predictions with phenomena that have become history. This Mr. Parkes does neatly and thoroughly in a book which stands out well above the curious miscellany of current work in the fashionable social studies.

Marx predicted that the rich would become richer and fewer, the poor poorer and more numerous. Mr. Parkes shows that even if the glosses of later socialist writers are taken into account, this prediction has not come true. Marx described the industrial proletariat as a unified class and the only really revolutionary class, and predicted that it would grow more unified and more revolutionary. Mr. Parkes shows that with the growth of trades unions, the development of automatic machinery, and many other changes, the industrial proletariat has become more divided and that it has not been revolutionary. Marx predicted that after a revolution made under Marxist auspices had consolidated itself, the state would wither away. Mr. Parkes has no trouble showing that either the Russian Revolution was not a Marxist revolution, or that Marx was wrong again; for even the eyes of faith can't help seeing the present unwithered Russian state. And so on through the long catalogue of Marxist beliefs and hopes. Mr. Parkes does an especially good job on Marxist economic theory.

As an instrument of persuasion, this book is by no means as awkward and ill-adapted as most of the work of well-meaning American progressive intellectuals. But Mr. Parkes has too lively a mind to be very conciliatory. His book will infuriate the convinced Marxist; and of course the ordinary conservative needed no proof that Marx was wrong. Yet the recent alliance between Stalin and Hitler has undoubtedly jolted many American progressives into some distrust of Marxist ideas, and among such people Mr. Parkes should be read carefully and pondered long.

But an autopsy? No doubt the more enthusiastic converts to anti-intellectualist doctrines go too far. There is *some* relation between human beliefs and human experience. Beliefs repeatedly contradicted by experience have been known to die—well, almost die. Very few still believe the earth is flat; and men like William Miller, who predicted the end of the world on various specific dates in the 1840's, usually lose most of their followers when the world fails to end on schedule. Yet, especially in religious belief, there is no very close correlation between belief and mere experience of this world. Marxism is for many Marxists a form of religious belief, easily proof against the logic and good sense of a book like Mr. Parkes's.

Mr. Parkes goes beyond his autopsy of Marxism into a discussion of a positive program for a progressive democratic society. What he wants is a return to the basic principles of eighteenth-century liberalism, to the free-market system, to real competition, to a capitalism without a *rentier* class, and without the present system of financial control which enables individuals to plunder the community instead of serving it. Here, too, he writes clearly and persuasively, and, for a man who is bringing forward a positive program, with a surprising lack of dogmatism. Like some of the proposals for *real* competition, *sensible* laissez-faire, brought forward recently by economic theorists, Mr. Parkes's proposals sometimes seem established too theoretically, seem to neglect human habits and dispositions already set against a "return to eighteenth-century liberalism." But on the whole he escapes in his own practice the charges he makes against the Marxists; he does not spin out mere theories.

Crime in Crinoline

BLANCHE FURY. By Joseph Shearing. New York: Harrison-Hilton Books. 1939. 346 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

FOR a good, creepy murder-without-mystery, there is nothing like the Victorian era, where the comfort and security of the gentry point up the crime by contrast, and where the very murderers (and their chroniclers) have time to make their plans carefully. There is also much to be said for following (not too closely) an actual trial; when at last the crude crime breaks in through the thick curtains into the snug lamplight, the wind blows still colder if we know that this, or something very like it, did happen. Mr. Joseph Shearing has written several excellent reconstructions of this kind, of which "Blanche Fury" is the latest and the most ambitious; it is based, he tells us, on the records of a celebrated trial in Norwich, England. The earlier part of the book is a triumph of atmosphere. It opens auspiciously, like so many of Wilkie Collins's novels, with a prologue set two generations earlier than the body of the book, showing the first tragic flaw to be expiated by later generations, when the eighteenth-century squire turns off the mistress who had believed herself married to him, and makes what he considers generous arrangements for her, and for the illegitimate son whom he will bring up among the tenants. Mr. Shearing's gift for atmosphere extends to the names and even to the armorial bearings of his characters: as he points out, "Blanche Fury" means "The White Devil," and he has borrowed from another English family a motto that elsewhere seems merely grotesque, and has given it a sinister meaning.

From the jacket of "Blanche Fury"

In the body of the book, the haunting atmosphere deepens. The young Fury who is now the squire has as his steward Adam Strangeways, who is the son of the bastard so generously provided for, and who is bitterly convinced his grandmother was truly married, and that he is by right the lord of the manor. And then young Mr. Fury in his kindness brings his poor relation, his beautiful, smouldering cousin Blanche, to be his wife's companion and his little girl's governess. Blanche also believes that the estates should be hers, and naturally she and Adam Strangeways are drawn together. The strained situation, the deceptions into which Blanche falls, the whole thunderous air charging itself for the storm, could not be better done. Only in the actual crime

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and denouement, one feels a certain disappointment, for the reason that at first Blanche's part is too passive, and when she does act it is from a side of her nature that has been insufficiently prepared. She has been drawn as a Vittoria Corambona, and she does not even take the part of a Lady Macbeth. One is inclined to feel that the author has been led astray by too great fidelity to his original trial; that the character of Blanche Fury built herself up in his mind as one demanding more action than the facts allowed her, and that he made the mistake of following the facts rather than his own conception. Nevertheless, "Blanche Fury" is a fine, sinister, brooding book for those who like their crime in crinoline.

Vigilantes of Journalism

CRUSADERS FOR AMERICAN LIBERALISM. By Louis Filler. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1939. *422 pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES McD. PUCKETTE

MR. FILLER has written a useful and comprehensive book upon those glamorous journalistic figures known as muckrakers. These authors have deserved a historian. Mr. Filler has done his canvas with breadth and with detail, and has shown a discrimination in his comment upon the varying qualities of the men and women whose work he describes. Those who lived through the decades just after the turn of the century will recapture in these pages a sense of the feelings which the muckrakers stirred so mightily; those of a newer generation can profitably learn of this phenomenon of American life, and find the chronicle an interesting one.

The roll is long. Lincoln Steffens, David Graham Phillips, George Kibbe Turner, Charles Edward Russell, Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, S. S. McClure were some of the giants of the movement. For the most part newspaper men and women who turned to the magazines as the militant national journalistic force, they found stories to shock the national conscience in the shame of the cities, in frenzied finance, in food adulteration, in corporation misdeeds, in the white slave traffic. The United States had grown great and rich, and in the rush and hurry some persons and companies had grown very great and rich in questionable ways. Here and there in the history of the nation there had been great scandals; but the muckrakers of the decade just after 1900 were soon to create the conviction in the minds of many that corruption was the rule and not the exception.

Theodore Roosevelt damned the muckrakers, but it was he who inspired many. The admirer of T. R. will not relish Mr. Filler's chapter on their hero; his estimate of that robust President, nevertheless, is a sound one, done with a keen analytical sense.

The muckrakers shocked the national conscience. McClure, Ridgway, Collier, and others were magazine publishers who knew how to capitalize the value of the sensations these brilliant writers produced. But the muckrakers, as Mr. Filler observes, had no basic philosophy. They were not liberals, as we take that word for the long pull. They were literary vigilantes, performing a useful service of summary justice, and occasionally assassinating the relatively innocent. They prepared the national mind to accept more orderly social reform. At the time when the biggest guns were being fired in the battle, a more far-seeing group, in the Pittsburgh Survey, was bringing out the social consequences of the twelve-hour day in the steel mills, a work-week piously blessed by some of the saintliest of the industrial leaders.

It would have been easy to make a sensational story of the muckraking era. Mr. Filler has done better. He has made his book a sound, true, and interesting report.

The Iris Books

ART OF THE FAR EAST: Landscapes, Flowers, Animals. 15 *Plates in Color from the Works of Old Chinese and Japanese Masters. Introduction by René Grousset. New York: Oxford University Press.* 1939. $2.75.

FRENCH CATHEDRAL WINDOWS OF THE TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES. 19 *Plates in Twelve Colors. Introduction by Marcel Aubert. The same.* $3.

ENGLISH WATERCOLOURS: Turner, Girtin, Cotman, Constable, Bonington. 12 *Color Plates. Introduction by Laurence Binyon. The same.* $3.

Reviewed by FRANK J. MATHER, JR.

THESE new color albums of Swiss manufacture fairly deserve their ambitious title, the Iris Books, for at a moment when the market is flooded with crude or merely plausible color reproductions we find here, instead, color plates of most refined execution and as near facsimiles as our present resources permit.

Since the contents are sufficiently suggested in the subtitles printed above, our notice will confine itself to general considerations of format and editorial policy. These albums are of folio scale neatly and substantially bound in gray buckram. They average to contain something over a dozen plates each from carefully studied masterpieces. Ample introductions are entrusted to distinguished authorities in the various fields, to scholars who have notable gifts of literary communication. The editorial point of view is puristic—to represent a great chapter of art at its best in a few eminently telling examples. Generally the selections are excellent, though they necessarily involve regrettable exclusions. One may well marvel, for example, at the severity of the taste that could omit Sesshu from any anthology of Far Eastern painting.

The Institute, Paris—watercolor by R. P. Bonington.

Books conceived and executed in this spirit are simply a boon to the studious art lover, who rarely finds such satisfactory material within his means. The albums are good for many years on the shelf, yet so cheap that the student may detach the plates to file with his photographs. The present writer would be tempted to mount the admirable plates of cathedral windows between glass or stout cellophane and use them as transparencies. If the reader will hold one of the plates against a light, he may be tempted to a similar helpful vandalism.

The reproductive process, which is flexible enough to cope with Gothic glass and every variety of water color, should meet all future needs. One looks forward to the promised album of Persian Miniatures.

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So You Want to Be a Writer?

BY SHERWOOD ANDERSON

Pinchot

"You get your picture in the book section of *The New York Times* and in *The Saturday Review of Literature*"...

IN any group of young writers you will inevitably find those who want to write and those who merely want to be writers. They want, it seems, what they think of as a kind of distinction that they believe comes with being a writer. It's an odd thing. I daresay a kind of distinction, always I fear a bit synthetic, does come to a few, but really there are so many writers nowadays. You meet them everywhere. You can't escape them.

Let us say you are a writer. You write and write and finally you get a book published and then another and another. You get your picture in the book section of *The New York Times* and in *The Saturday Review of Literature.*

So you go about. You meet people. You are probably thinking to yourself that everyone knows who you are. You forget that to be what is called famous as a writer only about one out of every 100,000 people need have ever even heard your name. The chances are that you have been associating a lot with others a good deal like yourself.

You have been seeking such people out and they have sought you out. You go about with so-called intellectuals. When your last book was published, your publisher, thinking it would boost your sales, has sent an advance copy of your book to a lot of other writers. He has said, "We are sending you by this mail an advance copy of Mr. Musgrave's new novel. We think it a great book. If you agree with us, please write." Or it may be a new novel by Miss Ethel Longshoreman. It seems women are nowadays writing our novels more and more. I guess they do it instead of getting married. It may be because of unemployment among the men. I don't know. Anyway it's a fact.

When it is put up to you, you do it. You think, "If I don't puff his or her book she or he won't puff mine." Very likely, however, you don't read the book. You get your mother-in-law to read it. Anyway that's my system.

The point is that you get to thinking everyone must know you. You have been about with other writers and they have said that your book is "just fine." They have said you have "a wonderful style" or something like that and you have paid them back by saying something nice about their last book and you have got rather to expecting it—I mean, you know, being something special, attracting attention wherever you go.

Then you get a jolt. Just when you want to be known, no one knows a thing about you. You have gone somewhere and have been introduced as an author. I knew a man, a manufacturer in Ohio. I was always meeting him in New York. He always had a blonde with him and always introduced her as a cousin. "Cousin Alice, meet my friend Sherwood Anderson, the author."

She always thought I was Maxwell Anderson or Robert Sherwood. She put me in the theater. She wasn't the kind that reads books.

"I just loved your last play."

Once I promised one of the man's cousins a part in one of my plays.

"I have just written a new play. You are just the type for it," I said.

His cousin became excited. I gave her Maxwell Anderson's address.

"You come to see me this afternoon."

It happens that I have never met Maxwell Anderson. I wonder if he is a strong man.

You are introduced as an author and at once someone is on the spot. You are introduced let's say to a doctor. He doesn't go about with a certain queer expectant light in his eyes, thinking that people who don't know all about him aren't cultured. He doesn't think that just because you haven't been to his office to get some medicine for your indigestion you are an ignoramus. He may even, up to the moment when he is introduced to you, have led an honorable, upright life. Like George Washington, he has never told a lie, but he tells one now. He thinks that, being an author, you are expecting it. He is like his wife who, when you once were invited to his house to dinner, rushed down town and bought one of your books and put it on a table right in the middle of the living room, where no one could miss seeing it.

He says, "Oh yes. I have so enjoyed your books."

In a case like this, a man caught like this, in the company of an author he has never read, may try to get out of it by pretending he is a little deaf and hasn't heard when told you are an author, but he can't get away with that. It may be that you would let him get away with it, would be glad to, but someone is sure to pop up.

Let us say your name is Smith.

"How do you do, Mr. Smith. Glad to meet you," he says, and tries to make a get-away, but he is stopped.

"But this is Mr. Smith, the author," someone insists.

He gets a kind of hunted look on his face. There is a pleading look in his eyes. Please, if any of you who read this happen to become writers, when a thing like this happens to you, be kind. Don't press the man. Don't compel him to say, as he must say if you crowd him, that something happened just as he was becoming absolutely absorbed in your last book when his wife took it away from him and every time he tried to get it back she cried.

It is a good idea in such a case to help the man out. Don't force him to tell too many lies. Let's say you have written a novel about a banker. Of course, I know none of you, if you ever become writers, will be that foolish. No one ever writes novels about bankers. Writers can't even borrow money from bankers. You all know,

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or should know, that nowadays it isn't worth while writing novels about any class other than the proletariat. If you write novels about people of any other class the communists will get you. They'll call you a bourgeois, and then where are you?

So you are face to face with the man who has not read your novel about the banker and who has made the mistake of pretending that he has. You should bear this in mind. The man who has made the bluff about reading your book, when he has only some five minutes earlier heard of you for the first time, really made the bluff out of kindness of heart. You ought to try in turn to be kind to him. Help the man out. Give him a lead. Say something like this, say, "I think the banker in my novel was a most unusual man, don't you?" That will let him know that the book is about a banker.

Then go a little further. Mention the name of the town in which the banker had his bank. That will be a help. And then, if your banker ran away with the wife of the cashier of the bank, mention that. Try to drag it in. You will find it worth while. Authors should occasionally do these little deeds of kindness. Oh, the glad look that will come into such a man or woman's eyes.

I remember once being at a party with Mr. Ring Lardner. It was down in the city of New Orleans. Ring had come down there with Grantland Rice and Grantland was afraid the people of New Orleans might not know Ring was there. So Rice had done a lot of free publicity for Ring. He had called up the Mayor, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis Club, the Rotary Club, the Lions Club. There was a big party at some rich person's house, and Ring took me along. He said, "Come on, Sherwood, let's give them two authors. Let's see if they know which is which."

So we did go and they knew we were authors. Grantland had told them. He got there ahead of us. He pointed us out. "There they are. There they come," he said.

He did everything but tell them what books we had written. He slipped up on that. That was what raised the devil with them. A kind of dark shadow came over the assembly. People went about with troubled eyes. They gathered in little groups whispering to each other but finally, out of one of the groups, a woman emerged. She was, I remember, very determined-looking. She had that kind of jaw, that kind of eyes. She was a rather big woman, strong and muscular, who, had she been a man, might well have been a professional wrestler.

She came up to us. She had this do or die look on her face. She tackled me first. Someone had given her my name.

"Oh, Mr. Anderson," she said, "I'm so glad you are here. I have been so longing to meet you." She said that she felt she already knew me through my books. She got that off, and there was a pause.

"Oh that last book of yours," she said. She thought it was very, very beautiful and suddenly I had a vicious impulse.

"And what book do you mean? Name it. I dare you to," I wanted to say but I didn't say it. I kept still and there was another pause. It was the kind of pause that, if it had been pregnant, should have brought forth triplets. There was this terrible waiting time and then Ring, out of the fullness of his heart, helped her out.

"You mean of course 'The Great Gatsby'," he said, and there was a look of joy and gratitude on that woman's face that I'll never forget. It was the kind of good deed on Ring's part that inspired other good deeds. It inspired me and I told the woman that Ring was the author of "Sister Carrie" and of course she ran about and told all the others. It made everything all right. It made an evening that had started to be a complete flop a great success.

A few years ago I was living in a certain town down in Virginia and I bought and ran for a time a country newspaper in the town. I don't know just why I did it. I guess I didn't want the people of the town to think of me as a writer. I figured that if they thought of me as a writer they would be afraid of me as they had a right to be. So I thought I'd get around them by being a newspaper publisher. And people have a right to be afraid. We writers, in certain moods will use anyone we can. We say to ourselves that we are after truth.

Once I did an unfair mean thing to a certain man in Ohio. He was my friend and I rather sold him out. He was angry. My name began to get up in the world and he threatened me. He said he was going to write telling just what kind of man I was.

"Please do," I said. "Rough it up. Send the whole story to me. I've half forgotten." I pointed out that I could do the job better than he could. I meant it too. I was a story teller and I knew I could beat him telling the story.

There are certain men who are what I call "feeders." The story teller loves such men. They go about telling little things that have happened to them. They cannot write the stories but they can tell them. Put pens into their hands and away fly the stories.

A man who worked for me on my farm was such a story teller. What tales he told! There is a certain naïveté in such men. They look out upon life with clear eyes. They tell you the most wonderful tales of things they feel, things they have done, things that have been done to them. They tell everything very clearly. The man worked for me one summer and I cleaned up on him. I got several fine stories, heard them from his lips, while we worked together, or rather while he worked and I sat watching him, rushed at once into the house, put down the stories just as he had told them. Then I was a fool. At the end of the summer I told him what I had been doing and he grew afraid of me.

Or he thought I was getting too much for nothing. I should have kept my mouth shut. I lost a good feeder. Now the stories he might tell to many people through me are lost.

So there we are, we writers. We go about among people. We are presumed to be reading people as a man reads the pages of a book but most of the time we are doing nothing.

People keep coming up to a writer. "What are you at work on now?" they ask. He isn't working on anything. He has a tooth that needs filling and it hurts. He is wondering where he will get the money to buy a new car. He isn't at work on anything but he knows what is expected of him. It is expected that he will be at work on some big serious task. If he is wise he gives them what they expect. I do.

"I am at work on a history of the American Civil War," I say. It sounds dignified and scholarly. A look of awe and respect comes into the people's eyes.

"What a man!" they are thinking. It is wonderful. At times I almost convince myself that I am at some such great task.

We become self-conscious. That is what we have to fight against and it is sometimes a hard and bitter struggle. If we get up a little in the world people write about us. They put our pictures in newspapers and magazines. What we do about that is to send one taken when we were thirty, when our hair was thick yet, when our teeth were sound, when we had a fresh, cheerful look on our face.

Occasionally someone tells us that we are great.

It is so difficult not to believe and if you do convince yourself that it is all bunk you are miserable about that too.

So you want to be a writer?

Isn't it wonderful?

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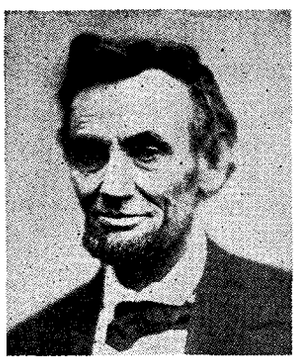
The great book on Lincoln



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Fifty Years After

(*Continued from page 4*)

discussion seem as far away as Ichnaton's controversy with the Priests of Amen-ra, and not quite so clear-cut. Browning has at all times a sort of hot-blooded impartiality. And I think it is this which gives many of his poems their air of having been written yesterday or of being foretastes of something to be written a hundred years hence. As one of his admirers has said, it is as if he could at will put himself outside of the prejudices and the fears of his epoch, at the same time preserving a complete sympathy for those who did not possess his strange power. How can a a man take sides when "the poet's business is to see everything and record what is significant?" Like the poet in "How It Strikes a Contemporary" who is now cited for the hundredth time to the same old purpose:

> He took such cognizance of men and things,
> If any beat a horse, you felt he saw;
> If any cursed a woman, he took note;
> Yet stared at nobody.

Observe, don't stare! Everything has got to be seen, and if judged at all, then judged in the light of a more perpetual illumination than that afforded by the gas-jets of London in say 1855, or for that matter by any 100-watt lamp of 1939. It would seem that the attitude was a good one, for Browning's idiosyncratic studies of idiosyncrasy still appear to be not without their validity.

Perhaps sixty brief and not so brief poems remain noble and exciting in the extreme, instinct with whatever it is that makes verse ageless. But Browning has a still larger claim on aftertime. I deliberately ignore his dramas, with one lingering glance at passages in "Paracelsus" which are superhuman and his own, however clear one may see Shelley in them; but Browning is one of the three English poets of the nineteenth century who undertook the gigantic and achieved it. Shelley, Tennyson, Morris, Swinburne, all undertook to work on the great scale and made a mess of it, whether because of misfortune or for mere defect of architectonic power. Wordsworth, Byron, and Browning, on the contrary, chose subjects of congenial magnitude, treated them with appropriate passion, and made real their enormous dreams. "The miniature may show the master-hand as well as, or better than, the Sistine ceiling." But Ruskin's cliché means something: "After all, size does count." We are impressed, and justifiably so, by the titanic, knowing, as it forces us to know, that it needs a titan to imagine it, let alone shape it. No one ever read "The Prelude" without recognizing a Wordsworth even Byron must respect and even Horace Smith dare not mock. It is impossible to read "Don Juan" without a sense of something else deeply interfused and quite as important, not to mention vast design and heavenly though hasty felicity of execution. And the man ought to have his bumps examined who has read "The Ring and the Book" without being aware of the "forming and informing spirit" and the subtlety and precision of the vastness.

It is true that Browning's mannerism and peculiarity are not negligible in the massy construction. Few of the most ardent have defended, or would defend, the two books which celebrate the lawyers in the case. But those two books would be missed "if they were removed from the great façade." They have their place in the proportion of the whole. And though Calverley had a right to mock (for no man mocked better), he "is a foot-note now to what he made fun of then." Whatever eccentricity and prolixity of detail in the same story ten times told (never without some burning newness), everything any poet would give his soul to know he had done, has been done somewhere in "The Ring and the Book," even though the poem does extend "from here to Mesopotamy." In the stiff phrase of a forgotten essayist, "there is no deep of the mind that has not been penetrated, no emotion that remains untouched." And for that reason I confidently predict, as is the custom at such moments as this, that fifty years hence other critics will be searching vainly for observations appropriate to the hundredth anniversary of a sad hour in a Venetian palace.

There is nothing to debate or question. "If a star is in the sky, it is in the sky." Persons who deny it are in the difficult position of those monkish believers in the Ptolemaic system who refused to see the moons of Jupiter through Galileo's lens. Interest may be momentarily diverted or eclipsed. But there is nothing evil in that. It is part of the nature of interest to pulsate. And I may close this chapter of platitudes by saying that though men forget a little while, they will return to Browning and know again the cool silver shock of discovery and the sense of the first rapture recaptured.

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Mowrer, Revised

GERMANY PUTS THE CLOCK BACK. By Edgar Ansel Mowrer. Revised edition. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1939. 410 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES F. GREEN

IN this new edition of his deservedly popular book, Mr. Mowrer adds a foreword and three chapters, totalling about one hundred pages. In most of his new material, dealing almost exclusively with diplomatic events, he unfortunately substitutes indignation for accurate reporting. Mr. Mowrer includes little that is new about the recent sequence of events, and almost nothing about internal developments in Germany since 1933. In his uncomplimentary estimate of Chamberlain and Daladier, he oversimplifies the problems confronting Britain and France in the post-war years, and especially since the depression. Regarding the Nazi-Soviet agreement, the present strength of the Hitler regime, and the course and outcome of the war, he is content to insert a few question marks and then conclude "None could say." In contrast to the powerful descriptive writing and shrewd political analysis of the original volume, the new pages are a disappointing combination of factual narrative and second-hand interpretation.

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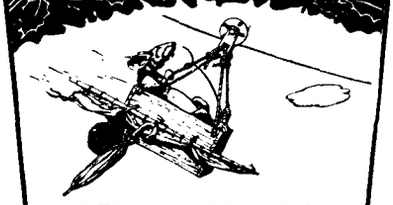

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The New Books

Biography

I'LL TAKE THE HIGH ROAD. By Wolfgang Langewiesche. Harcourt, Brace. 1939. 254 *pp.* $2.50.

He wanted to fly; so he went to a mid-western airport where he located a two-plane, one-man "flying and instruction service," and at fifteen dollars an hour, started his lessons. The fascinating and elusive art absorbed his books, his camera, his good car, and the second-hand car that followed the good one, besides all the money he could spare above the level of the barest subsistence. Still he somehow could not get the required hours in the air in the close sequence necessary to obtain that delicate coordination of muscle and observation which makes the flyer fit to meet emergencies. An exhibition parachute jump helped; general improvement in economic circumstances and various ingenious arrangements contributed. He made his wings as an average cross-country pilot of rented planes when he came to New York and for the first time tried a "light" airplane. (The adjective has nothing to do with the weight of the machine.) Then he really discovered the reason for all those fifteen-dollar hours, and from this point on the book is a hymn of praise to the best and most interesting of possible worlds, with examples of how much fun even troubles can be. All told, an unpretentious volume; but one that describes with evident accuracy and considerable sensitiveness the emotions of a fledgling aviator.

F. P.

Fiction

CLAUDIA. By Rose Franken. Farrar & Rinehart. 1939. 305 *pp.* $2.50.

Claudia is a beautiful child bride who suggests Gracie Allen by her sweet feminine lack of information and experience, and also by her heart of gold and basic shrewdness. David is her big, handsome, clever, impatient, tender, understanding husband; and their sex life is admirably adjusted. Miss Franken tells a series of short stories about their domestic crises: about David's fear that Claudia was getting too maternal toward him, and his deft interposition of two kittens; about their buying a house in the country, and having a baby; about the blonde who strong-arms him and the intellectual who makes passes at her. There are good secondary characters, including Claudia's mother and their cow, Louella. Like the heroine, the book is sentimental and amusing, silly and very good fun. Settle down and have some laughs and a couple of good long cries over it. Miss Franken writes so lightly and pleasantly that you'll scarcely be ashamed at all of the emotions in which you are wallowing; and anyhow, it doesn't pay to be rational all the time.

K. S.

THE GREAT TRADITION. By Frances Parkinson Keyes. Messner. 1939. 477 *pp.* $2.50.

Mrs. Keyes's long romantic novel, into which has gone a great deal of earnest writing and feeling, is marred by its confused emotions. It is clear that she abhors the violence and treachery of dictatorship; at the same time she worships the ideal of youth blindly dedicated to heroic comradeship and a common struggle. She shrinks from the destruction of the old liberal tradition in Germany, but nowhere can she find a place to lodge the shadow of blame—all men please and only events are vile. What results is a vague background of dissent from the excesses of brown-shirt Germany, and in the foreground a group of beautiful, clear-eyed youths sheathed in heroic light, led by the finest idealist of them all, a self-disciplined and spiritual young Nazi named Horst Wessel. Perhaps the book reaches its heights of intensity when Wessel leads his embattled angels to liberate Berlin from the communists, when he meets his death like a tragic hero, and a temporarily ennobled Goebbels speaks his obsequies.

It can be argued, at the very least, that the portrait and history of Wessel as here set forth are far from accurate; in this space it need only be said that the entire picture is blurred by indecisiveness. Mrs. Keyes, in her foreword, cites years of foreign residence and investigation into affairs in Germany and Spain, but just what she has discovered about them it is impossible to see.

N. L. R.

Miscellaneous

THE GEESE FLY HIGH. By Florence and Lee Jaques. University of Minnesota Press. 1939. 102 *pp.* $3.

Francis Lee Jaques is the best bird-portraitist working in America today. If this is in the nature of reckless statement, it is, at least, less recklessly applied to him than to another. What distinguishes Jaques chiefly from

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE CORPSE WITH THE PURPLE THIGHS *George Bagby* (Crime Club: $2.)	Homicidal happenings at Author Bagby's college reunion lead to hurry-call for Insp. Schmidt who operates with usual efficiency.	Exuberant graduate antics make lively background for tale that moves rapidly through one fracas after another.	Colorful
CURTAINS FOR THE JUDGE *Thomas Polsky* (Dutton: $2.)	Body of pant-less jurist hurtles through air to feet of reporter Griddle, who helps phlegmatic copper spot killer.	Lively dialogue, plentiful supply of suspects, and swift action lead to solution logical enough but oddly unconvincing.	Good enough
WHAT NIGHT WILL BRING *Hilea Bailey* (Crime Club: $2.)	Dirty work in midwest advt. agency culminates in murder which arthritic private sleuth and lively daughter solve at considerable peril.	Development of air-tight plot suffers slightly from abundance of technical stuff about ads and admen—which some may enjoy.	O. K.

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his fellows and forerunners is that, rather than painting birds against a few twigs of improvised scenery, he paints landscapes that include birds, thereby acknowledging that habitat is an essential element in the character of species. A canvasback duck painted with others in a vast setting of marsh-grass and sky is more authentic than its live counterpart in a zoo; the representation is whole, the actuality a mere fragment.

Mr. Jaques has long been appreciated by bird-students. The publication of "Canoe Country" last year and this companion volume now are his introductions to a wider public. The illustrations in this, as in its predecessor, are black-and-white, but it is extraordinary how much of the atmosphere which his paint-brush commands is at the service of his pen. There are heat and cold, daylight and dusk and high wind in these monochromic landscapes. The birds dominate them; they are wild and wary, always one with the climates they inhabit. Almost all the drawings represent ducks and geese that Mr. and Mrs. Jaques saw on a trip from Illinois to the Rainey Wild Life Sanctuary in the coastal marshes of Louisiana. Mrs. Jaques's text, like her observation, is artless and fresh. She observes in an instant, never coolly, and with like spontaneity sets down both her observation and her reaction to it. A duck or a wild landscape is always identified with some unique personal feeling, it is an object of delight or awe, it is warm with human emotion. Well —that is exactly what ducks and landscapes really are. The wilderness, ultimately, lies in the human heart.

L. J. H., Jr.

WORKERS ON RELIEF. By Grace Adams. Yale University Press. 1939. 344 *pp., with index.* $3.

It is sad but true that Grace Adams's book will prove enlightening to many literate citizens who consider themselves well-informed on current affairs. That the public at large should possess only hazy impressions and strong prejudices about the most significant social experiment of recent times is an indictment of modern education and political democracy.

Miss Adams could easily be criticized for using the short story, as she does in the book, as a vehicle for writing history, but since her style is seldom

(*Continued on page* 22)

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 297)

J. AUSTEN:
SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

I have studied his sentiments and I venture to pronounce that his mind is well-informed, his enjoyment of books exceedingly great, his imagination lively, his observation just and correct, and his taste delicate and pure.

Three cheers for

TAR HEEL EDITOR

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, in his front-page review in the *N.Y. Times Book Review:* "Such a picture of a civilization as can be found in no other book about the South, embodied in Josephus Daniel's story of his childhood, youth and early manhood . . . It is really a significant performance, this story of 'Tar Heel Editor,' *significant for its gentle innocence, for its accuracy,* and for its unflinching honesty . . . In fifty years historians will take their hats off and go to this book for a photographic picture, entirely artless but gorgeously true, a picture of a people struggling from one age and one civilization in three decades into another time and place in the history of our country."

GERALD W. JOHNSON, in the *N.Y. Herald Tribune Books:* "Knowing The Tar Heel Editor is worth while...One who never hesitates to blurt out the truth as he sees it . . . Daniels is extraordinarily illuminating on the darkest of all historical mysteries, to wit; how men felt at the time of which he writes . . . Here is penetrating shrewdness, elaborate politeness and unexpected, shattering candor and humor."

CHARLES McD. PUCKETTE, in *The Saturday Review:* "Here has been a man who, unlike so many in his region, has not wasted a moment in looking backward...*Tar Heel Editor* is honest, straightforward, kindly...A genuine interest in the welfare of his fellow man, a warm sympathy, a desire to better conditions in the place and the world in which he lived, and courage made him a force for advancement."

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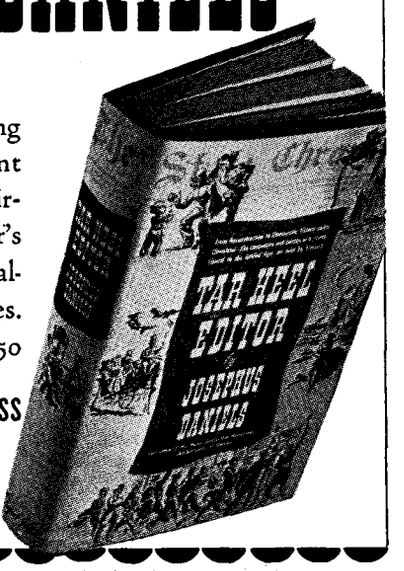

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

EVERY year Old Q. gets inquiries about the famous Quaker Calendars, printed in red and blue with pious mottoes. A recent novel, whose heroine always found that calendar useful, seems to have increased the curiosity. The calendar may be ordered from Zabel Bros., 5th Street and Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia, at 1½ cents each, plus postage; check, money or stamps *with order;* but at this late date deliveries probably not guaranteed before Xmas. ☞We believe about 50,000 of these are sold every year; mostly among the Philadelphia-minded. ☞When Old Q. was muttering lately about sciatica, E. T. L. suggested the treatment adopted by someone in Conrad & Hueffer's *The Inheritors*: it was drinking brandy and singing hymns (see chapter 16). ☞The Newberry Library, Chicago, is showing until Dec. 31 an exhibit of the famous Stone & Kimball imprints. Sidney Kramer's book on the subject will come from Normandie House (5062 Winthrop Ave., Chicago) before Xmas.

☞A perfect example of highbrow jargoon is in a critique of George Gissing by a British bluestocking. She thanks her publishers "for meticulous care that the book should have whatever advantage might accrue from being worthily presented." ☞Howard Haycraft says the Christmas Number (Nov. 17) of the London *Spectator* is required reading for Dorothy Sayers addicts. In that issue Lord Peter Wimsey suggests floodlighting the Albert Memorial during all blackouts. ☞It pleases us to see, in the latest catalogue from James F. Drake, Inc., a facsimile of the first edition title-page of Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia* (1687) bearing the official imprimatur of S. Pepys as president of the Royal Society. ☞At $375 this fine unrepared copy would be a handsome gift for the stocking of some university library. ☞Edwin Edgett, for many years literary editor of the Boston *Transcript,* is writing his reminiscences for Macmillan. ☞Harcourt Brace have contracted to publish here a batch of the apparently endless series of detective tales by Georges Simenon, who has been called the French Edgar Wallace.

☞Lovers of sea books, shipping prints, etc., should drop in to see Robert Potts, 157 East 56, N. Y. C. ☞Friends of the Dartmouth Library, one of those excellent groups that are helping to build up college collections, are gunning for the complete records of an old shipbuilding concern, the Fernald-Pettigrew Company (Portsmouth, N. H.) which built some lively clippers in the mid-19th-century.

☞We heard with much regret of the death (in Scotland) of Temple Scott, well known editor and connoisseur, who first came to New York about the turn of the century to represent John Lane in this country. ☞Apropos the Turtle Oil shaving soap, Councilwoman Genevieve Earle quotes Emerson to us: "The thoughts of a turtle are all turtle." ☞Speaking of hardshell without and tender within, we got a smile from the letter written by J. P. Morgan the Elder, age 13, to his teacher in Hartford H. S. He reproached her for being "so unhumane as to send me out of the class for laughing a little too loud which I can assure you I am perfectly unable to control and which no punishment will cure me of." ☞This is quoted by Herbert Satterlee in his life of Morgan (1837-1913).

☞The American Booksellers' Association urge Book Tokens for the puzzled or prostrated gift shopper. Any bookseller will fill in the Token (decorated with a drawing by Rockwell Kent) and the recipient can turn it in for any book available at the stipulated price. This obviously averts giving a friend a book he already owns. ☞Basil Blackwell, the widely admired bookseller and publisher in Oxford, writes:—"Here again, after just twenty-five years, is Oxford preparing for war; but what a difference! That sense of high adventure which inspired so many in 1914 is not here, nor is that cheap hatred of the enemy which unbalanced so many in those days. Instead there is, I fancy, something a good deal more formidable—a grim resolve to see the thing through at all costs, but almost an indifference to the "fruits of victory."

"As for the Book Trade: the freshmen and the second year men (the third and fourth have gone from us to various training centres) still eagerly frequent the bookshop. They are still to be found thick about the Poet's Corner, and I fancy that they are looking for new prophets.

"Not least of the trials of the bookseller's life is the nightly black-out at sundown, for every chink from which light might pour has to be stopped; and visitors creeping through the dark make their way through tortuous light traps, making them feel like Theseus in the Labyrinth.

"I suppose the most noticeable thing today is the growing quiet. One does not hear so often that undefinable hum which sounds in a bookshop when the visitors are cheerful and carefree. Cheerful our visitors are, but obviously more careful. They are more given to exploring remote parts of the shop. Perhaps they are nosing for a bargain, having in mind the Income Tax of 7/- in the £, and more to follow.

"But we are alive, and presently there will be strangely interesting developments in book taste."

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by William Geoffrey

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Virginibus Puerisque

The Saturday Review's Guide to the Season's Books for Children

Title and Author	*Age and Sex*	*What It's About*	*Our Opinion*
I AM A PUEBLO INDIAN GIRL *E-Yeh-Shure* (Morrow: $1.50)	6-8 Both	Short prose-poems about Indian life. Both author and artist are Indians. The text, however authentic, is outweighed by the beautiful pictures.	Special
MOUSEKNEES *William C. White* (Random House: $1.75)	8 and up Both	Mouseknees (real name Victor; job, hotel boy) was a happy, but truth-seeking native of Tobago. Fresh, flavorous yarns; fitting illustrations by Avery Johnson.	Good read-aloud
THE TALKING STONE *Caroline Cunningham* (Knopf: $1.75)	8-10 Both	A collection of Indian and Eskimo legends that are unusual in their authenticity and charm.	Easily read folk-lore
BEN AND ME *Robert Lawson* (Little, Brown: $1.50)	8 and up Both	Memoirs of a smug, sagacious mouse who made his home in Ben Franklin's cap and who, time and time again, set the famed inventor on the right track.	Illustrations far surpass text
FIRE, THE MASCOT *Paul Brown* (Scribners: $2.)	8-10 Boys	Fire is a Dalmatian dog who belongs to Engine Company No. I. A good deal about Dalmatians and fire-fighting both.	Irresistible
SKIPPACK SCHOOL *Marguerite de Angeli* (Doubleday, Doran: $2.)	Up to 10 Both	A Pennsylvania school in the 1700's. Eli Shrawder's family settles near German Town, and he finds a kind schoolmaster. Beautiful pictures.	Nice little story
HOMEMADE DOLLS IN FOREIGN DRESS *Nina R. Jordan* (Harcourt, Brace: $2.)	9-14 Girls	Fashionable homemade dolls, their costumes and settings, from inexpensive materials, described simply and clearly. Interesting craft.	Fun
PONY FOR SALE *Ann Stafford* (Knopf: $2.)	10-14 Both	The summer activities of four English children chiefly concern their ponies and their Aunt Mary's dog kennels. A horse show is an important event.	Harmless
PLAYS FOR HIGH HOLIDAYS *Tobitt & White* (Dutton: $1.50)	10-16 Both	Careful notes on music and dancing, with stage directions, make these four plays for religious holidays unusual.	Worth while for groups
THE DUKE DECIDES *John R. Tunis* (Harcourt, Brace: $2.)	12-16 Boys	The Harvard track star of "Iron Duke" goes to Berlin on the U. S. Olympic team to win the 1500-meter race. Mr. Tunis turns X-ray on intercollegiate and Olympic sports; it's not a pretty picture.	Good reading
THE BOY'S BOOK OF PHOTOGRAPHY *Edwin Way Teale* (Dutton: $2.)	12 up Boys	History of photography, cameras, and photographic methods. How and why to do things that will make good pictures. Some mention of possible careers.	Good handbook
HEROES ON YOUR STAMPS *John Gregory* (Knopf: $2.)	12 up Boys	Biographies of great figures of our national life found on American stamps. Should create added interest for boys already collectors and perhaps interest some who have not yet started.	Well-handled, interesting idea
FLIVVER TO CAMBODIA *Guy de Larigaudie* (Putnam: $2.)	Older Boys	The journey of two French boy scouts from Paris to Cambodia in a Ford. Their experiences, hardships, courage, and luck.	Good but naive account
POTTERY OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS *Helen E. Stiles* (Dutton: $2.50)	Older Children & Adults	An accurate and well-illustrated treatise on American aboriginal pottery.	Excellent book
THE SINGING TREE *Kate Seredy* (Viking: $2.)	10-12 Both	A Hungarian background . . . and the coming of the war before this one. Handsome pictures.	Serious
THE TREASURE HUNTER *Isabel Proudfit* (Messner: $2.50)	12-16 Both	An able, sympathetic biography of Robert Louis Stevenson, attractively illustrated by Hardie Gramatky.	Good
FLYING HOOFS *Edited by Wilhelmina Harper* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	10 up Both	A collection of twenty-four stories about horses from a varied selection of authors.	Fine

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The New Books

(*Continued from page* 19)

strained and her materials well integrated, she could more easily be praised. In outlining the case records of a young electrician, a friendless engineer, an Italian cobbler, an elderly clerk, a communist teacher, a lady physician, and a specialty buyer Miss Adams presents many facts about WPA, and much criticism.

WPA was bureaucratic; many projects were foolish; much labor was badly allocated; corruption was not infrequent; communistic activities were rampant; personal responsibility was undermined. The facts are substantially correct and the criticism is usually warranted, yet the reader is unsatisfied.

Since Miss Adams fails to raise the basic question whether relief accelerated or impeded recovery, her specific carpings must be ruled out *de minimis*. And though her stories carry conviction, the author never really comes to grips with the other crucial issue, namely, whether relief fundamentally altered the psyches of the workers.

That some men take advantage of relief; that others lose their instinct of workmanship; that still others develop neurotic symptoms—all this and more is common knowledge. But it would be uncommon knowledge to learn the frequency of, and the conditions under which, these developments occur. And it would also be uncommon knowledge to learn the frequency and the conditions under which relief reduced competitiveness, heightened the instinct of workmanship, and contributed to the solution of neurotic difficulties.

Miss Adams believes that in posing the question "Is WPA primarily work or is it primarily relief" she has discovered a basic dilemma. The reviewer suspects sophistical rhetoric, for WPA is "primarily work-relief." The geographic and occupational distribution of the unemployed, the exigencies of the federal and state budgets, the preconceptions of the administrative personnel, force WPA to vacillate between work and relief. And vacillate it must until agreement about objectives is approached.

Miss Adams's book is valuable for inciting us anew to appraise our objectives and techniques. Unfortunately, she contributes little to aid us in our difficult task.

E. G.

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Double-Crostics: No. 298

BY ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

				1-H	2-P	3-U		4-G	5-H	6-E	7-S		8-X	9-J	10-G	11-R
12-V	13-A	14-E	15-C	16-T		17-Y	18-S	19-V	20-E	21-R	22-B	23-O		24-P	25-D	
26-X	27-L	28-G	29-C	30-I		31-I	32-U		33-Y	34-K	35-J	36-R	37-L		38-O	39-M
40-Q	41-K	42-T	43-I	44-R	45-A	46-X	47-Y	48-H	49-G	50-C		51-F	52-D	53-K	54-Q	
55-W	56-K	57-I	58-U	59-O	60-M	61-V	62-Z	63-H	64-P		65-A	66-Y	67-S	68-X	69-I	70-J
	71-F	72-N	73-Q		74-K	75-I	76-R		77-M	78-F	79-P		80-J	81-W	82-G	83-E
84-L	85-T	86-M		87-O	88-Y	89-B	90-T		91-J	92-Z	93-M		94-Q	95-F	96-D	97-U
	98-C	99-T	100-L	101-I		102-N	103-D		104-A	105-T	106-J	107-M		108-M	109-U	
110-T	111-P	112-N	113-U		114-X	115-I	116-D	117-J	118-U	119-G		120-W	121-B	122-D	123-T	124-Q
125-R	126-P		127-V	128-A	129-Q	130-M		131-Y	132-A	133-Z	134-G	135-P		136-D	137-J	138-U
139-K		140-N	141-A	142-Z	143-F		144-B	145-T	146-G	147-I	148-M	149-K	150-A	151-L	152-V	
153-S	154-E	155-B	156-X		157-U	158-A	159-H	160-E		161-X	162-W	163-J	164-C		165-L	166-N
167-H		168-S	169-Q	170-J	171-G		172-W	173-Q	174-H	175-S	176-K	177-U	178-F	179-O	180-Z	
181-X	182-W	183-K	184-Y	185-F	186-J											

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 19 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Mother of Solomon.

B. Russian-American violinist (1891—).

C. Simpleton.

D. English college for women.

E. One who agrees with everything.

F. Egyptian female dancers.

G. Aristocrats of ancient Rome.

H. State of being all-comprehensive.

I. Russian ballet-producer (1872-1935).

J. Ontology.

K. Causing friction.

L. Posts at foot of staircase.

M. Imprint of Wm. Morris press.

N. Brazilian palm used for baskets, etc.

O. Attractively smart (slang).

P. Northern Albanian dialect.

Q. Symbols of diligence, swiftness (heraldry).

R. American dramatist (1888—).

S. Courage.

T. In respect of appearance.

U. Unskilled (as a seaman) (comp.)

V. Mole-like mammal.

W. Cubs.

X. Points of unappreciable duration.

Y. Incites to irritation.

Z. High Turkish title.

WORDS

104 150 13 158 45 132 128 65 141

89 121 144 155 22

15 98 50 29 164

103 116 136 25 52 122 96

83 154 6 20 14 160

185 78 71 51 95 143 178

49 10 171 28 4 82 134 119 146

5 174 63 159 48 1 167

69 147 101 30 115 31 75 57 43

9 163 91 170 80 137 117 70 35 106 186

74 34 139 41 183 176 149 56 5

151 100 27 84 37 165

107 93 130 39 86 148 108 77 60

102 72 112 140 166

179 38 87 23 59

64 111 79 126 24 135 2

73 173 129 40 169 124 54 94

11 125 21 44 76 36

153 175 7 168 18 67

42 145 16 110 105 85 99 90 123

109 58 3 32 177 157 138 113 97 118

152 61 12 19 127

182 162 55 81 120 172

8 156 181 114 46 68 161 26

184 17 47 131 66 88 33

180 92 133 142 62

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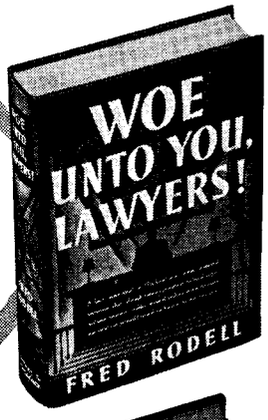

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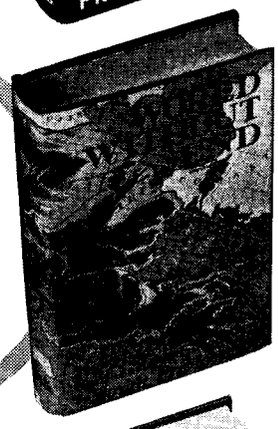

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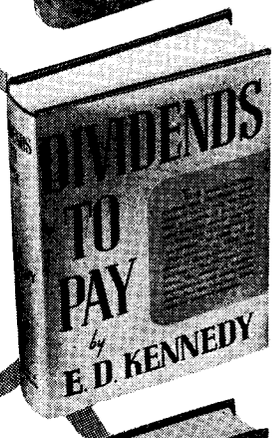

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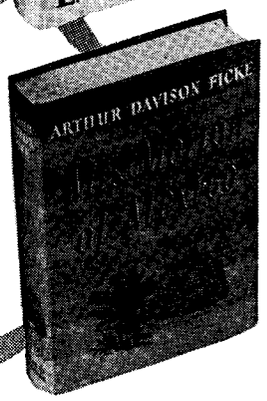

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